

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USUN N 01988 110305Z

21

ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-06 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SR-02

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 702

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERSUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SREF, UNRWA, XF

SUBJECT: SYG ISSUES URGENT APPEAL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO MAINTAIN
UNRWA

1. SYG JUNE 10 ISSUED PRESS STATEMENT APPEALING URGENTLY FOR
CONTRIBUTIONS TO MAINTAIN WORK OF UNRWA. HE DESCRIBED AGENCY
AS NOW FACING "THE WORST FINANCIAL CRISIS IN ITS HISTORY," AND
SAID \$30 MILLION DEFICIT MUST BE COVERED BOTH IN INTEREST OF
PALESTINE REFUGEES AND IN BROADER CONTEXT OF JUST AND LASTING
MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT. AT SAME TIME, CHAIRMAN OF UNRWA WORKING
GROUP, TURKISH AMB OLCAY, ISSUED SEPARATE STATEMENT STRONGLY
SUPPORTING SYG'S APPEAL. TEXTS OF STATEMENTS BY SYG AND AMB
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PAGE 02 USUN N 01988 110305Z

OLCAY APPEAR IN PARAS 3 AND 4 BELOW.

2. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY SOME WHO PARTICIPATED IN MONTHLY MEETING OF UN ARAB LEAGUE DELS JUNE 9 THAT DECISION WAS TAKEN THAT ALL ARAB MISSIONS WOULD REPORT TO THEIR CAPITALS UNRWA'S DESPERATE FINANCIAL SITUATION AND SYG'S APPEAL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS. WE ARE TOLD THAT IN LIGHT OF PLO'S CHANGED POSITION TOWARD UNRWA, NO ARAB DELS OPPOSED AT LEAST INDIRECT ASSISTANCE TO UNRWA BY WAY OF UNESCO. (FRENCH MISSION TELLS US THAT LATEST "L'ORIENT" CARRIES MOST EXPLICIT STATEMENT YET OF PLO SYPPORT FOR UNRWA IN INTERVIEW WITH PLO SPOKESMAN SHAFIG AL HOUT. WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY PARIS TRAMSITTING TEXT IF IT IS AVAILABLE.).

3. QUOTE
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL HAS RECEIVED FROM THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGGES IN THE NEAR EAST (UNRWA) AN URGENT REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE AGENCY, WHICH IS NOW FACING THE WORST FINANCIAL CRISIS IN ITS HISTORY.

UNRWA HAS HAD A CHRONIC FINANCIAL PROBLEM FOR MOST OF THE PAST DECADE BUT THE BUDGET DEFICIT THIS YEAR --NOW ESTIMATED AT ABOUT \$30 MILLION --IS ON AN ORDER OF MAGNITUDE NEVER BEFORE EXPERIENCED. IT IS THE RESULT OF INFLATION AND CURRENCY DEPRECIATION AND REPRESENTS ALMOST ONE HALF OF THE AMOUNT REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN RELIEF, HEALTH AND EDUCATION PROGRAMMES FOR THE PALESTINE REFUGEES UNTIL THE END OF 1975.

IT IS GENERALLY ACCEPTED ON ALL SIDES THAT UNRWA WILL BE NEEDED UNTIL A JUST AND LASTING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST HAS BEEN ACHIEVED, AND AT THE LAST SESSION THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY EXTENDED UNRWA'S MANDATE FOR A FURTHER THREE YEARS UNTIL 30 JUNE 1978. ULTIMATELY, ALL MEMBER STATES ARE UNDER A MORAL OBLIGATION TO SEE THAT UNRWA IS ENABLED TO CARRY OUT ITS MANDATE TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO THE REFUGEES. SINCE THE LAST GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION THE ASSEMBLY'S WORKING GROUP FOR THE FINANCING OF UNRWA HAS BROUGHT THE AGENCY'S FINANCIAL NEEDS TO THE ATTENTION OF GOVERNMENTS IN SUPPORT OF EFFORTS BY THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL TO RAISE ADDITIONAL FUNDS. IN VIEW OF THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION, THE SECRETARY-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 USUN N 01988 110305Z

GENERAL HAS HIMSELF APPROACHED A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENTS. THERE HAS BEEN SOME REDUCTION IN THE DEFICIT AS A RESULT OF INCREASES IN CONTRIBUTIONS AND LOWER FLOUR PRICES, BUT URWA IS STILL WITHOUT SUFFICIENT FUNDS. INDEED, THE FINANCIAL SITUATION IS NOW SO CRITICAL THAT UNLESS ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE FORTHCOMING, THERE WILL BE NO ALTERNATIVE TO A REDUCTION OR SUSPENSION OF PROGRAMMES FOR THE SECOND HALF OF 1975.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL VIEWS WITH GRAVE CONCERN THE PROSPECT OF DRASTIC REDUCTIONS IN THE REFUGEES' RATIONS AND THE VIRTUAL ELIMINATION OF THE SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAMME. ELIMINATING OR DRASTICALLY CURTAILING SERVICES OF THIS KIND ON ACCOUNT OF LACK OF FUNDS WOULD INFLICT FURTHER HARDSHIP ON THE REFUGEES AND CAUSE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS. UNRWA IS NOW COMPLETING ITS 25TH YEAR OF SERVICE AT A CRITICAL TIME IN THE HISTORY OF THE MIDDLE EAST. FAILURE TO MAKE AVAILABLE ADEQUATE RESOURCES FOR THE TASK ENTRUSTED TO UNRWA BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY COULD WELL ADD A NEW ELEMENT OF INSTABILITY AND DISCORD TO AN ALREADY VERY TENSE SITUATION.

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL THEREFORE APPEALS URGENTLY FOR THE NECESSARY CONTRIBUTIONS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE WORK OF UNRWA, BOTH IN THE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINE REFUGEES THEMSELVES AND IN THE BROADER CONTEXT OF ASSISTING THE SEARCH FOR A JUST AND LASTING SETTLEMENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM.

UNQUOTE

4. "THE WORKING GROUP ON THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (UNRWA) SHARES FULLY THE GRAVE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL IN HIS STATEMENT TODAY REGARDING THE ACUTE FINANCIAL CRISIS NOW FACING UNRWA. AS THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL OF UNRWA HAVE SAID, THE BUDGET DEFICIT IS HUGE (\$30,000,000 IN A BUDGET OF 125,000,000).

"THE FINANCIAL SITUATION IS NOW SO CRITICAL THAT, UNLESS ADDITIONAL SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE FORTHCOMING, THERE WILL BE NO ALTERNATIVE TO A REDUCTION OR SUSPENSION OF UNRWA'S SERVICES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 USUN N 01988 110305Z

FOR THE SECOND HALF OF 1975, IN ORDER TO AVOID A COLLAPSE OF THE PROGRAMME, SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD CAUSE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS; IT COULD WELL ADD A NEW ELEMENT OF INSTABILITY AND DISCORD TO A VERY TENSE SITUATION.

"TO AVOID WHAT COULD BE TRAGIC DEVELOPMENTS, THE WORKING GROUP, WHICH UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 3330 (XXIX) SHARES WITH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENSURING THE ADEQUATE FINANCING OF UNRWA, STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE APPEAL OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO MAINTAIN THE WORK OF UNRWA WITH THE NECESSARY FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS. WE BELIEVE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CAN AND SHOULD DO NO LESS."

UNQUOTE

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